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Comment:



OAS Eyes Meetings on Cuba Tangle

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The possibility is dawning that the Organization of American States meeting on Cuban subversion in Venezuela may be separated from a second meeting, also sponsored by Venezuela, to "strengthen hemisphere democracy." This phrase means "to discourage the appearance of more de facto regimes."

If this idea prospers, the full weight of all Cuba's Latin American opposition can be channelled into action at the meeting already in prospect to penalize Communist Cuba for trying to overthrow the Venezuelan government in 1963. The OAS has already confirmed an authentic Venezuela's hard evidence on this subversion.

SURE OF VOTES

Venezuela is already sure of enough votes to call the meeting aimed at Castro and the second one, aimed at military takeovers. But if a first conclave, quite definitely divorced from the second problem, is held, it is certain that a far larger number of Latin American countries can attend it with free hands.

Non-constitutional regimes in this hemisphere today are distressingly many. They can be divided into two general classes—those that are transitory regimes that came into power to obviate a genuine communist threat, and those that simply hold power because dictatorial groups can get away with it.

Once the Castro problem is dealt with, it will be far easier for the first group of governments not only to regularize their situations, but also to help along those hemisphere forces opposed to the entrenched dictatorships.

In particular, a sorting out of the dangers to the peace and progress of the hemisphere, to be dealt with one by one, will enable Brazil's new military-backed government to act out its anti-communist sentiments inside the OAS. For the ques-

tion of Cuba will then be divided from the question of the Brazilian government's own validity.

What Brazil does in the OAS about Cuba will very strongly affect the attitude taken by Argentina and Uruguay, and even by Bolivia and Chile, which have helped form the core of the "soft-on-Cuba" bloc.

SEVEN OTHERS

Seven other military or military-backed dictatorial regimes would also be much likelier to deal firmly with Castro if they are not forced at the same meeting to fight for their own moral and legal positions in the hemisphere family.

Unless something of this kind is done, the OAS may be checkmated by Communist Cuba. If Cuba's support for subversion can force one country after another into a de facto government—and if those governments, to save their own 'face' will not act against Cuba because the meeting on Cuba comes in the same package with an attack on their position—then the affairs of the hemisphere are in a hopeless tangle.